

# Grain Truck and Ocean Rate Advisory: Quarterly Updates

Transportation and Marketing Programs  
Transportation Services Division  
[www.ams.usda.gov/AgTransportation](http://www.ams.usda.gov/AgTransportation)

## Truck Advisory

**Table 1: U.S. Grain Truck Market, 3rd Quarter 2017**

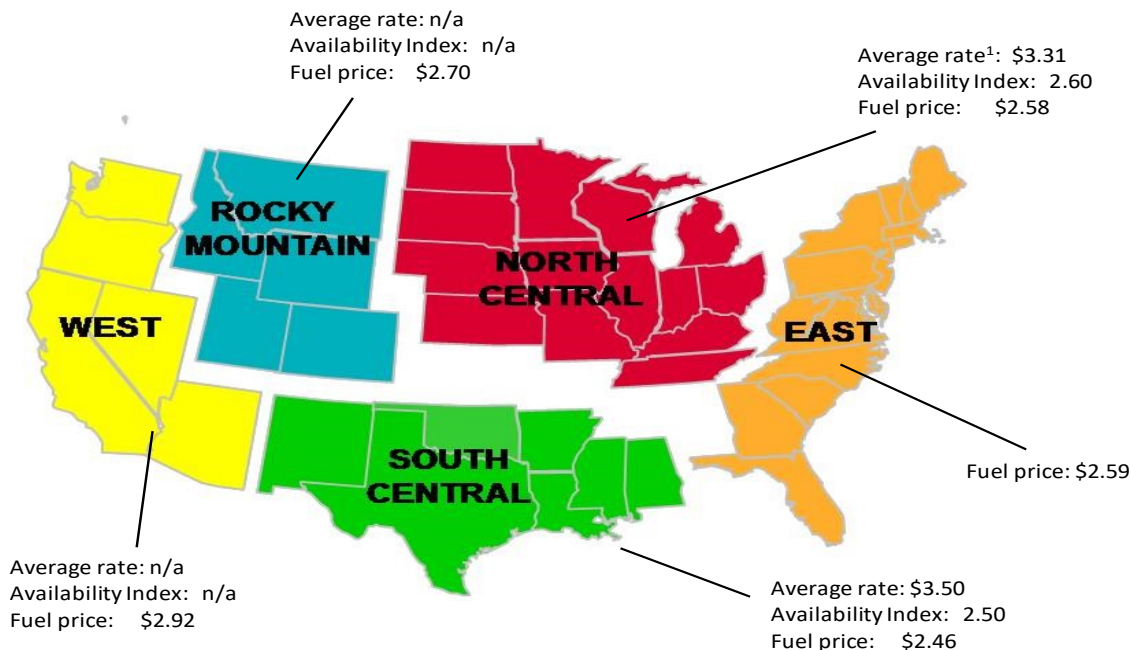
	25 miles	100 miles	200 miles	Truck availability	Truck usage	Future truck usage
	<sup>1</sup> Rate per mile, per truckload			<i>Quarterly Index</i>		
				1=Very Easy to 5=Very Difficult	1=Much Lower to 5=Much Higher	
<b>National average<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>4.34</b>	<b>3.24</b>	<b>2.85</b>	<b>2.70</b>	<b>3.20</b>	<b>3.40</b>
North Central region	3.99	3.25	2.69	2.60	3.40	3.40
Rocky Mountain	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
South Central	4.43	3.22	2.85	2.50	2.50	3.00
West	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

<sup>1</sup>Rates are based on trucks with 80,000 lb gross vehicle weight limit, and are quoted in U.S. dollar

<sup>2</sup>National average is based on rates received from various States, but not every State is represented.

Source: Transportation and Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

**Figure 1: U.S. Grain Truck Market, 3rd Quarter 2017**



<sup>1</sup>Average rate per loaded mile, based on truck rates for trips of 25, 100, and 200 miles

Note: Fuel prices are a quarterly average (unit per gallon)

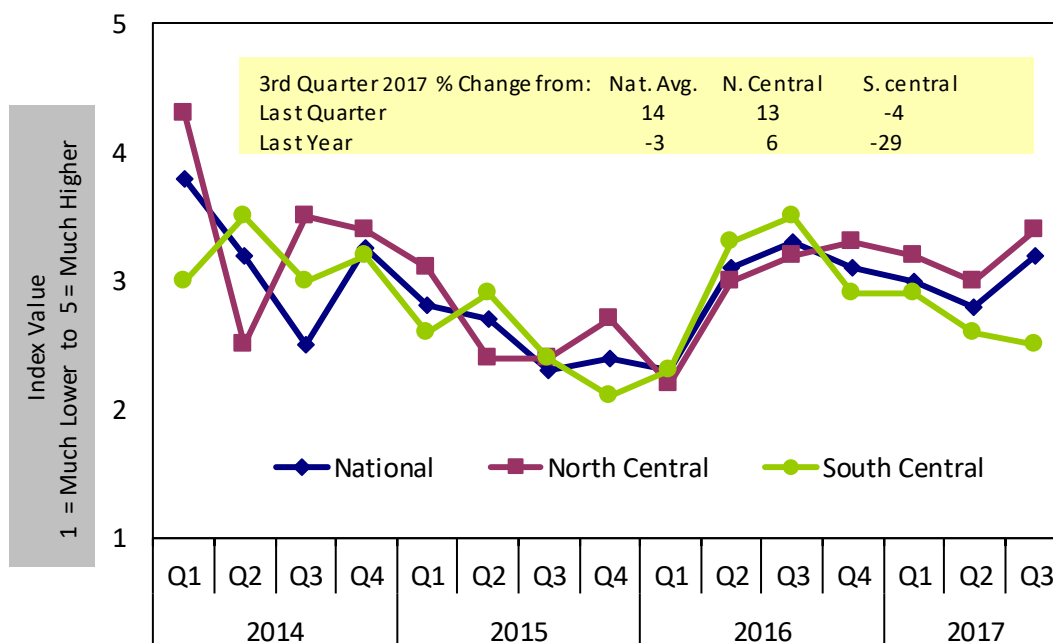
Fuel Price Data Source: Energy Information Administration U.S. Department of Energy, [www.eia.doe.gov](http://www.eia.doe.gov)

# Truck Usage

**Table 2: Regional Truck Usage Index**

Current Truck Usage 1 = Much Lower to 5 = Much Higher					Future Truck Usage 1 = Much Lower to 5 = Much Higher			
2015	1st Qtr	2nd Qtr	3rd Qtr	4th Qtr	1st Qtr	2nd Qtr	3rd Qtr	4th Qtr
<b>National</b>	<b>2.81</b>	<b>2.70</b>	<b>2.30</b>	<b>2.40</b>	<b>3.27</b>	<b>3.30</b>	<b>3.30</b>	<b>2.60</b>
North Central	3.10	2.40	2.40	2.70	2.60	3.80	3.50	2.80
Rocky Mountain	3.00	2.00	2.20	2.30	3.00	3.00	2.80	2.50
South Central	2.60	2.90	2.40	2.10	3.60	2.40	3.40	2.00
West	2.90	2.90	NA	NA	3.40	2.90	NA	NA
2016	1st Qtr	2nd Qtr	3rd Qtr	4th Qtr	1st Qtr	2nd Qtr	3rd Qtr	4th Qtr
<b>National</b>	<b>2.30</b>	<b>3.10</b>	<b>3.30</b>	<b>3.10</b>	<b>2.40</b>	<b>3.30</b>	<b>3.50</b>	<b>3.20</b>
North Central	2.20	3.00	3.20	3.30	2.40	3.50	3.40	3.30
Rocky Mountain	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
South Central	2.30	3.30	3.50	2.90	2.50	4.00	3.50	3.10
West	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
2017	1st Qtr	2nd Qtr	3rd Qtr	4th Qtr	1st Qtr	2nd Qtr	3rd Qtr	4th Qtr
<b>National</b>	<b>3.00</b>	<b>3.00</b>	<b>3.20</b>		<b>3.00</b>	<b>2.60</b>	<b>3.40</b>	
North Central	3.20	3.00	3.40		3.20	2.80	3.40	
Rocky Mountain	NA	NA	NA		NA	NA	NA	
South Central	2.90	2.70	2.50		2.80	2.50	3.00	
West	NA	NA	NA		NA	NA	NA	

**Figure 2: National Truck Usage, 3rd Quarter 2017**



Source: Transportation and Marketing Programs, AMS/USDA

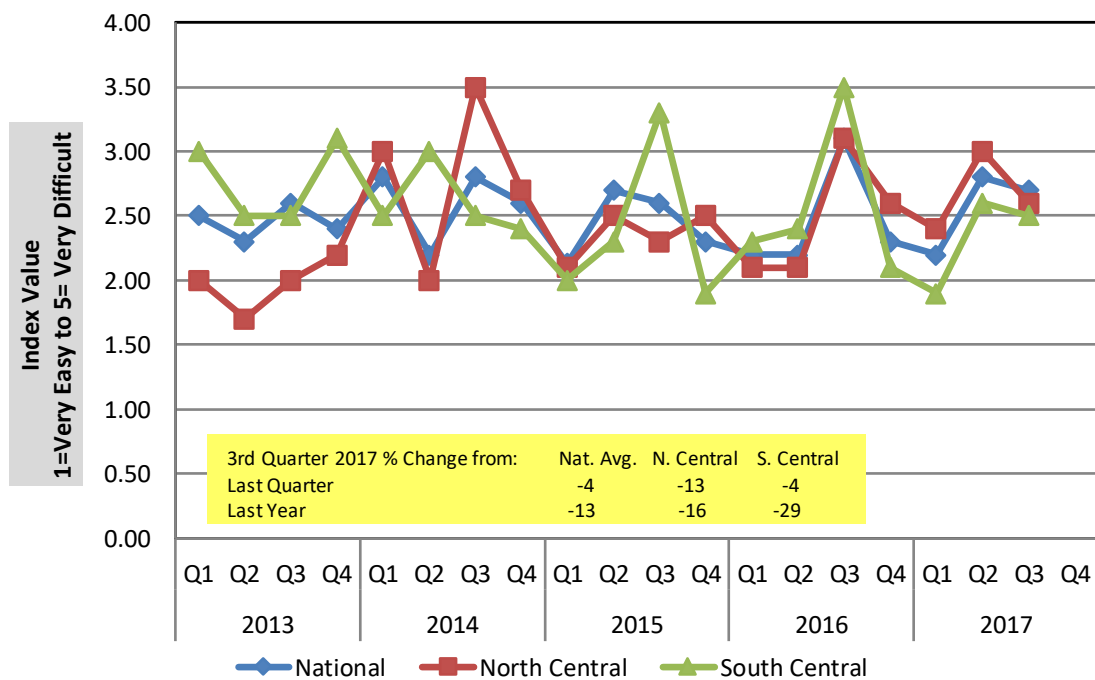
# Truck Availability

**Table 3: Quarterly National Truck Availability Index**

Region	1= Very Easy	5=Very Difficult		Current qtr as % change from	
	3rd Quarter 2017	Previous Quarter	Same Quarter Last Year	Previous Qtr	Same Qtr Last Year
National	2.70	2.80	3.10	-4	-13
North Central	2.60	3.00	3.10	-13	-16
South Central	2.50	2.60	3.50	-4	-29

The truck availability index tracks the trends in perceived ease of hiring a truck as reported by grain elevators.

**Figure 3: National Truck Availability**



# Truck Rates

**Table 4 : Average Grain Truck Rates for Short and Long Hauls, 3rd Quarter 2017 (\$/mile per truckload)**

Region	25 miles	100 miles	200 miles	% increase from:					
				Last qtr			Same qtr Last year		
				25 mi	100 mi	200 mi	25 mi	100 mi	200 mi
National Average	\$4.34	\$3.24	\$2.85	-1.4%	2.9%	4.8%	32.3%	14.9%	14.0%
North Central	\$3.99	\$3.25	\$2.69	-7.0%	5.9%	3.9%	27.5%	23.1%	15.9%
Rocky Mountain	NA	NA	NA	-	-	-	-	-	-
South Central	\$4.43	\$3.22	\$2.85	-0.7%	0.0%	0.0%	20.4%	11.8%	5.2%
West	NA	NA	NA	-	-	-	-	-	-

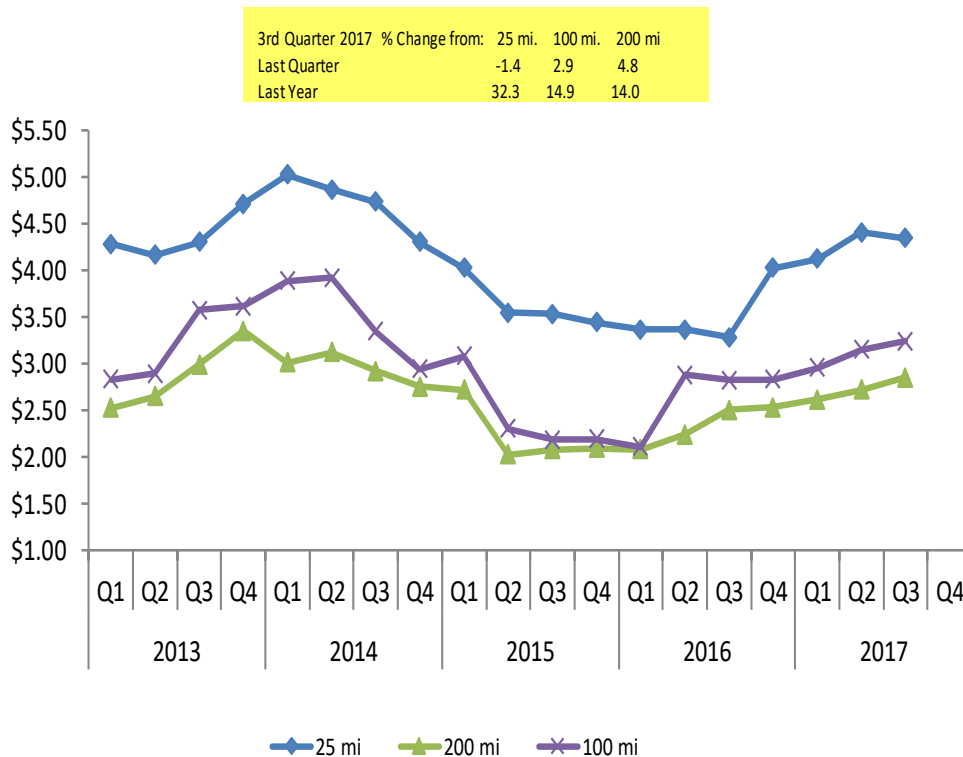
NA: data not available

Rates are based on trucks with 80,000 lbs gross vehicle weight limit

**Source: Transportation and Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA**

A truck is assumed to carry 55,000 lbs or 25 metric tons of grain. Rates per metric ton per mile can be calculated from rates per truckload.

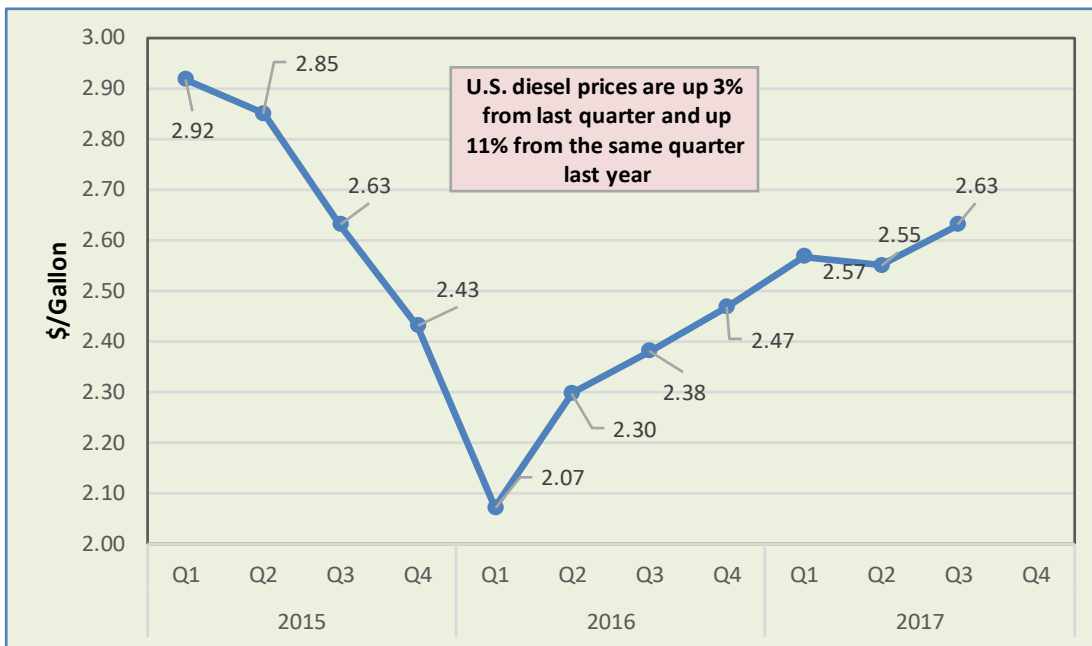
**Figure 4: National Average Truck Rates by Trip Distance**



## U.S. Diesel Fuel Prices

The **diesel fuel price** provides a proxy for trends in U.S. truck rates. Diesel fuel is a significant expense for grain movements.

**Figure 5: U.S. Average On-Highway Diesel Fuel Prices**



Source: Energy Information Administration/U.S. Department of Energy

**Table 5: 3rd Quarter 2017 Average Diesel Fuel Prices (All Types - \$/Gallon)**

Location	Price	Change From	
		Last Quarter	Same Qtr Last Year
East Coast	2.66	0.07	0.27
New England	2.65	0.03	0.23
Central Atlantic	2.78	0.04	0.30
Lower Atlantic	2.57	0.09	0.26
Midwest	2.58	0.10	0.23
Gulf Coast	2.46	0.06	0.22
Rocky Mountain	2.70	0.06	0.25
West Coast	2.92	0.09	0.27
California	3.00	0.08	0.25
U.S.	2.63	0.08	0.25

Source: Energy Information Administration/U.S. Department of Energy

## Ocean Rates

Table 6: Ocean Shipping Rates for Bulk Grain (\$/metric ton)

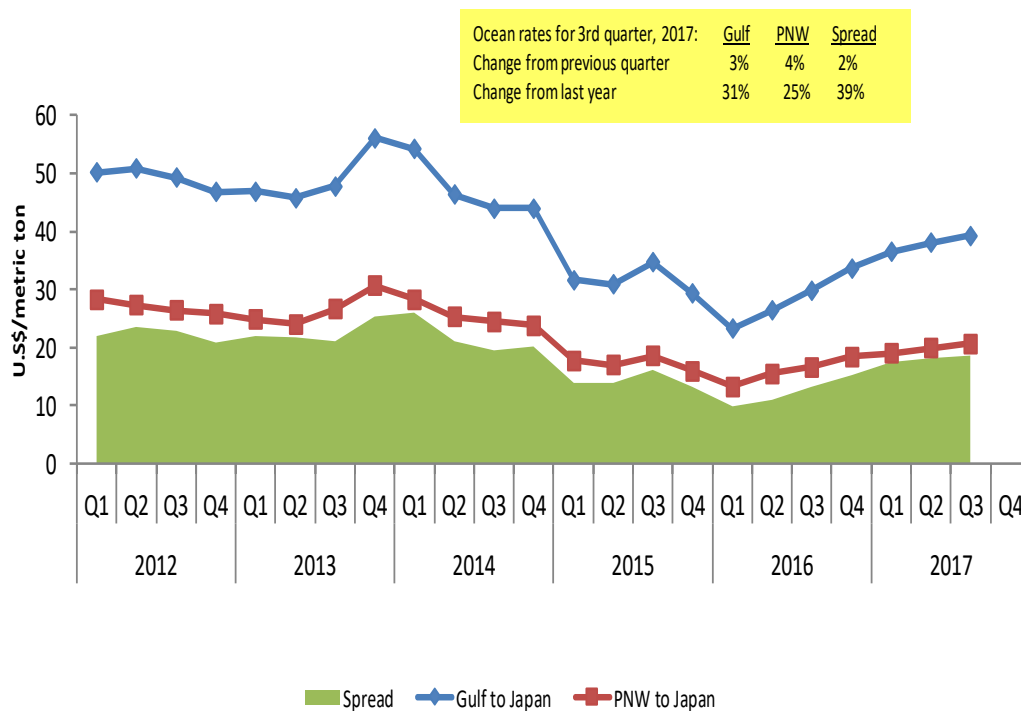
Gulf to										
Country	1st Qtr 2016	2nd Qtr 2016	3rd Qtr 2016	4th Qtr 2016	Average	1 <sup>st</sup> Qtr 2017	2 <sup>nd</sup> Qtr 2017	3 <sup>rd</sup> Qtr 2017	4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr 2017	Average
Japan	23.22	26.40	29.93	33.67	28.31	36.45	38.08	39.23		
Rotterdam	11.65	13.72	15.10	14.83	13.83	14.77	14.49	15.03		
China	21.34	24.37	28.27	32.60	26.65	35.17	37.15	38.37		
Mexico	10.44	11.65	13.20	13.26	12.14	14.27	12.95	12.98		
Colombia: Atlantic Port (East)	13.19	14.24	16.23	17.54	15.30	19.96	17.48	18.19		
Colombia: Pacific Ports (West)	19.90	20.64	22.72	24.22	21.87	28.04	24.37	26.64		

PNW to										
Country	1st Qtr 2016	2nd Qtr 2016	3rd Qtr 2016	4th Qtr 2016	Average	1st Qtr 2017	2nd Qtr 2017	3rd Qtr 2017	4th Qtr 2017	Average
Japan	13.3	15.50	16.61	18.43	15.96	19.02	19.93	20.71		
China	12.3	14.26	15.53	17.51	14.90	18.27	19.01	20.16		

Source: O'Neil Commodity Consulting

Figure 6: Grain Vessel Rates and Spread, U.S. to Japan



Source: O'Neil Commodity Consulting

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[Brazil Soybean Transportation Indicator](#)

[Agricultural Refrigerated Truck Quarterly](#)

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